

DRAFT
Greensboro Citizen Sign Committee
Non-Conforming Billboard Subcommittee Meeting
August 13, 2008
Planning Director's Office, 3rd Floor, Melvin Municipal Office Building

Present: Marsh Prause, Dan O'Shea, Rawls Howard and Dick Hails

There was review and discussion of the meeting notes from the Subcommittee's first meeting on July 30. In addition, comments and feedback on these notes from the Sign Committee's meeting on August 7 were noted as refinements on several issues.

The group discussed and reached general consensus on the following two topics during the meeting:

- 1) Replacement of non-conforming billboards on the same site –
 - a. Location - shall be permitted to be relocated and replaced on the same lot or on an adjoining lot with the same owner or on an adjoining lot covered by the same PUD or other unified zoning plan;
 - b. Compatibility - the new sign must be compatible with materials and architectural styles of adjoining and nearby buildings and other site improvements;
 - c. Impact - the new sign may not be larger or taller than the original sign and cannot have different or more intense illumination; it shall also not further increase spacing non-conformities from other billboards, churches (except for storefront churches) or residential zoning.
 - d. Modifications - if it is felt that meeting the above design standards is not feasible, the Technical Review Committee may review and approve a modification of the standards, finding that the new sign achieves equal or better performance, with no greater visual impact than the original sign.
- 2) Relocation of non-conforming billboards to another site with the removal of an existing non-conforming billboard –
 - a. General – shall only permit such relocated billboards to be located on new sites with very strict design requirements, to reduce visual impacts and improve the appearance of the new sign;
 - b. Location – shall only be located in designated activity centers, mixed use, pedestrian oriented and design overlay areas; no new billboards shall be located on South Elm Street; underlying zoning for the new site must be HI, LI, HB, CB or GB [SHOW MAP];
 - c. Size and Scale – would only allow signs at or below 300 square feet and 30 feet in height; in addition, on signs located near sidewalks and pedestrian areas and in design overlay districts, additional size and height restrictions could also apply, based on design guidelines or special use permit restrictions.

- d. Spacing – new location must meet all billboard spacing requirements from other billboards, residential zoning (measured along public streets, and sign not visible from residential properties) and churches (except for storefront churches);
- e. Compatibility – new sign must be designed to be compatible with nearby buildings and other improvements, considering sign frame materials and architectural style; in addition, other design guidelines applicable to the area shall also be met, such as from overlay districts;
- f. Placement – sign shall be placed on or near building(s) on site where feasible, to limit visual sign impacts;
- g. Landscaping –
 - i. shrubs and/or trees shall be planted on the site at a Type C rate within a 10 foot wide planting strip, for an area as long as the linear foot width of the sign;
 - ii. the landscaping shall be placed either beneath and/or next to the new billboard on site;
 - iii. if not feasible to place on site, at least 3 canopy trees shall be planted within or adjoining the public ROW, within 200 feet of and along a street adjoining the sign site;
 - iv. at least 50% of planting materials shall be evergreen; landscaping shall be selected and located to not significantly obscure the normal view of the sign from adjoining streets, considering the landscaping at mature size;
 - v. other ordinance requirements for landscaping shall also be met, including alternate methods of compliance and substituting new plantings with preservation of existing trees on the site.
- h. Electronic changeable copy signs shall not be permitted on new signs, unless a special use permit is issued and with at least a 50% reduction in size and height from the original sign, with additional sign restrictions possible to insure compatibility of the sign with the context of the site;
- i. Modifications – if it is felt that meeting the above standards is not feasible, the Technical Review Committee may review and approve a modification of the standards, finding that the new sign achieves equal or better performance, with no greater visual impact than the original sign and no less visual impact than the above standards provide.

An additional Subcommittee meeting was set for Thursday, September 11 at 11:30 am in the Planning Director's Office again. Staff will try to provide by that date information regarding the number and location of non-conforming billboards in the City.